else in the country. Nor do ONGC propose to set up any such plants except, perhaps, small power plants in States like Tripura to monetize idle & locked up gas pools. From the national perspective of Energy Security, of which oil security is an essential component, ONGC remain committed to their core functions viz., the exploration and production of oil and gas. Diversification into other areas can only be supplemental to, and not at the cost of, concentration on their areas of core competence.

Crude oil prices in International Market

†99. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the prices of crude oil in international market were ail time high during October and November, 2004.

(b) if so, what was the highest price and when this prevailed;

(c) wheter it is also a fact tht the prices of crude oil in international market have declined since then; and

(d) if so, the lowest prices in international market recorded since first week of November, 2004 to February, 2005 and the average price assessed during November, 2004 to February 15, 2005?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (d) The trend in the movement of monthly average price of the Indian basket"otcrude oil for the period from April 2004 onwards is given in the Statement. (See below). During the year * 2004-05 (upto the 24th February 2005), the price of the Indian basket of crude oil was the highest on 24.2.05 at US$ 45.57/barrel. The lowest price of the Indian basket of crude oil between the 1st November 2004 * and the 15th February 2005 was US$ 34.68/barrel (on 13.12.2004) and the average price during that period was US$ 38.27/barrel.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Statement

The monthly average price of Indian basket of crude oil for the period from April 2004 onwards

Month	Monthly Average Price ($/bbl)
April' 04	32.37
May' 04	36.09
June' 04	34.23
Jul/04	36.35
August' 04 ,	40.53
September" 04	39.15
October" 04	43.38
November[1]04	38.81
December" 04	36 85
January' 05	40.99
February' 05 (upto 24th Feb)	42.18

Introduction of Euro-ll and Euro-Ill Fuels

100. SHRI R.R GOENKA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the various oil companies in the country have been asked to adhere to April, 2005 for introduction of Euro-ll and III fuels;

(b) whether it is also a fact that these companies are facing some operational problems and may have to seek extension of the fixed deadline;

(c) if so, the details of any fresh review undertaken recently to coordinate with the oil companies to help them resolve their genuine problem; and

(d) the details of fresh strategy drawn up, if any, to meet/revise the original deadline?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKARAIYAR): (a) to (d) As per the Auto Fuel Policy approved by the Government on 3.10.2003, the Oil Companies had been instructed to introduce Bharat Stage ll/Euro III equivalent fuels in the country as per the